

Testes cells may be key to new cure

We raised last time the specter of one of the more bizarre biological experiments that I have heard about in some time. Can we use testes cells to treat Parkinson's patients?

Parkinson's, of course, is a degeneration of the brain's ability to control body movements. It affects somewhere between 500,000 and 1,500,000 Americans, and likely has multiple causes. Certain genes and personality traits have been indicated as having at least some slight but significant association with the disease, but these account at best for only a small minority of cases. "Toxic chemicals" are thought to have major influence, but details are very sketchy. The disease is known to be associated with a degeneration of nerve cells (neurons) in specific areas of the brain, and most patients subsequently show a greatly reduced production of dopamine, a normal and necessary brain chemical.

A variety of treatments have been

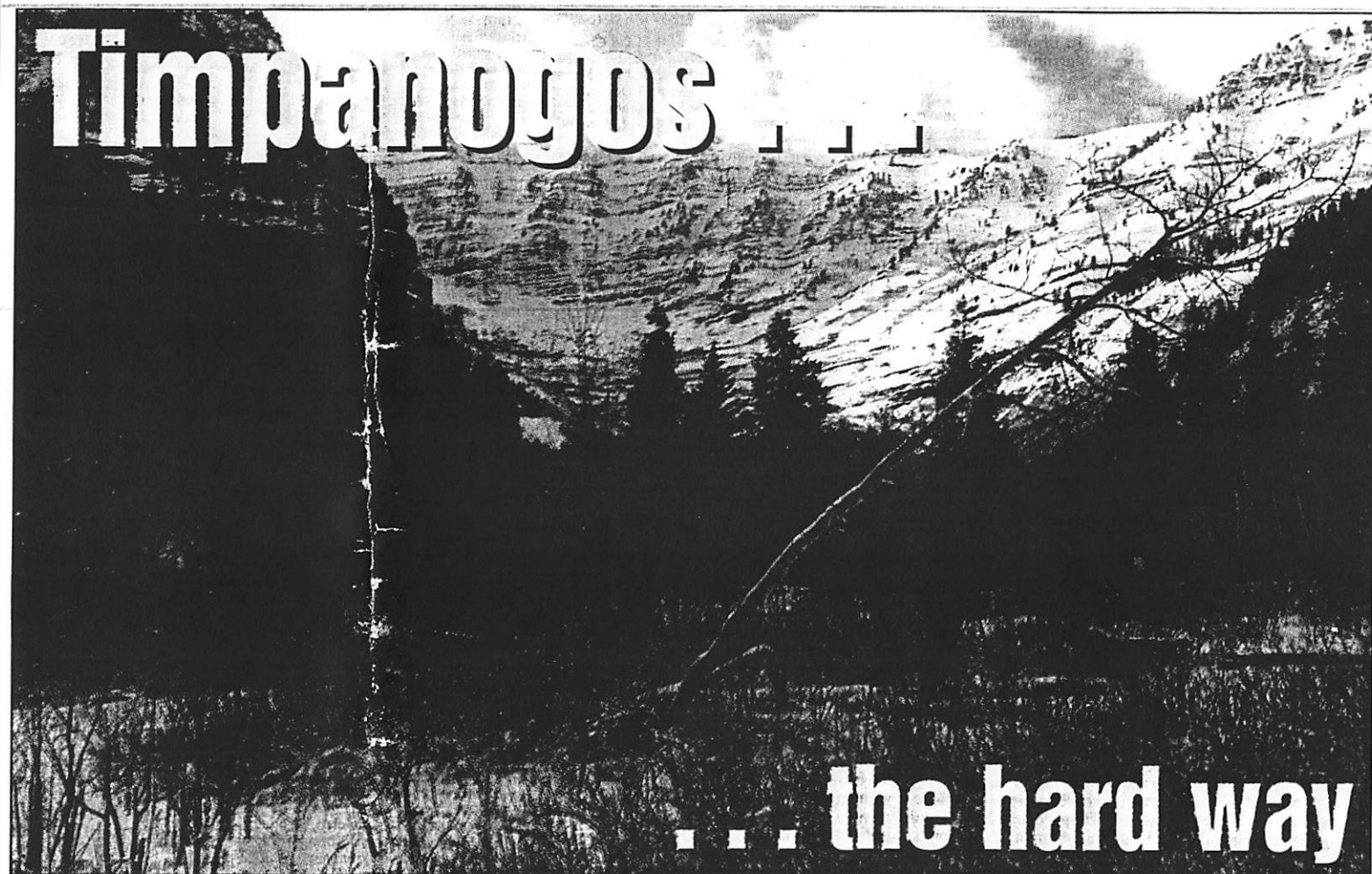


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Science & Society

tried over the decades, from burning out tiny areas of the brain, to a variety of drugs (L-DOPA is one frequently used, but its effect in elevating dopamine seems to lessen over time), to transplanting a variety of dopamine-producing cells into the brain. We'll focus on this latter approach.

Implanting healthy neurons from the brains of aborted fetuses into the brains of Parkinson's patients has repeatedly shown some beneficial response. But using fetal tissue is of course highly controversial, and (in the necessary quantity and quality) is difficult to obtain. So researchers have been exploring the possibilities of transplanting cells from other species — so-called xenotransplants. A few animal species can mani-



Daily Herald Photo/Jason Olson

Account of 1916 climb gives details of 2 men who scaled wintry peak

By PAT CHRISTIAN
The Daily Herald

It still amazes me how story ideas often come wrapped up in tiny surprise packages, as this account of a brave winter mountain climb of Mt. Timpanogos did.

What an adventure Dean Brimhall and Karl Hardy must have had using snowshoes and

I had just finished the story about three young men who had summited a south peak on Timpanogos this December (*Daily Herald* Dec. 27).

Those young climbers may think mountaineering craziness is a relative modern phenomenon. I know I was surprised by the earliness of Brimhall and Hardy's winter ascent, and don't even know if

